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## Dateline DEA

Drug Enforcement Administration's Biweekly E-mail Informant

January 13, 2012

### **Top Stories from the DEA, December 31, 2011 to January 13, 2012**

#### **Former Leader of Tijuana Cartel/Arellano-Felix DTO Pleads Guilty**

On January 4, Benjamin Arellano-Felix, the former leader of the Tijuana Cartel/Arellano-Felix Organization (AFO), entered a guilty plea in San Diego federal court. Arellano-Felix was extradited by Mexico to the United States on April 29, 2011, to face narcotics trafficking, money laundering, and other organized crime-related charges. Long-reputed to be one of the most notorious multi-national drug trafficking organizations, the AFO controlled the flow of cocaine, marijuana, and other drugs through the Mexican border cities of Tijuana and Mexicali into the United States, with other operations in southern Mexico and Colombia.

According to court records and the defendant's admissions, Arellano-Felix was the leader of the AFO from approximately 1986 to until his arrest in Mexico on March 9, 2002, on Mexican charges. During that time, Arellano-Felix served as the ultimate decision maker for the AFO. Arellano-Felix and other AFO members conspired to import and distribute within the United States hundreds of tons of cocaine and marijuana for which the AFO obtained hundreds of millions in U.S. dollars in profits. Arellano-Felix conspired with other members of the AFO to launder drug proceeds by directing other members to transport, transmit, and transfer hundreds of millions in U.S. dollars to Mexico. At Arellano-Felix's direction, members of the AFO kidnapped, physically restrained, and murdered numerous persons in furtherance of their illegal activities. Also at Arellano-Felix's direction, members of the AFO bribed law enforcement and military personnel and murdered informants and potential witnesses in order to obstruct or impede law enforcement investigations.

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#### **Operation Four Horsemen: 15 Sentenced, Nearly Ton of Cocaine, \$31 Million Seized**

The head of a significant Mexican drug trafficking and money laundering cartel who was a key target of *Operation Four Horsemen*, Oliver Maciel-Macedo, was sentenced on January 4. *Operation Four Horsemen*, resulted in the seizure of 973 kilograms of cocaine, 1,445 kilograms of marijuana, and more than \$31 million in drug proceeds from operations in Atlanta, Georgia and Laredo, Texas.

On August 4, 2009, agents followed Maciel-Macedo to a parked bus. At that time agents observed the transfer of multiple kilograms of suspected cocaine from the bus to Maciel-Macedo's vehicle. In addition, Maciel-Macedo was observed transferring bags of suspected drug proceeds. Agents followed Maciel-Macedo, and he along with a passenger were arrested. A few hours later, agents executed search warrants on residences Maciel-Macedo had visited, locating 150 kilograms of cocaine. Shortly after, agents executed another warrant on the bus, where they found a concealed stash of \$5,241,180 in cash.

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#### **Large Scale Jamaican Drug Trafficker Sentenced in Tucson**

On January 9 Mikado Nabob Thompson, of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, a native of Jamaica, and lawful permanent resident of the United States, was sentenced after previously having been found guilty of continuing criminal enterprise and conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute over 1,000 kilograms of marijuana. Twelve other co-conspirators including many born in Jamaica, plus his co-defendant Paul L. Williams, have already been found guilty. The evidence at trial showed that from 2002 to 2009 Thompson and members of his violent drug trafficking organization distributed in excess of 11,000 pounds of marijuana from Tucson, Arizona to cities in the eastern United States, including Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, New York City, Atlanta, Jacksonville and Tampa. During the conspiracy, Thompson and other members of his organization accumulated assets, including a Lamborghini Murcielago and a Rolls Royce Phantom. The total forfeiture claim against Thompson has been entered at \$4.4 million.

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#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

In a milestone in U.S. – Colombian relations Carlos Lehder, who became known as a leader of "The Extraditables" arrived in the United States 25 years ago. A major cocaine trafficker, Lehder was indicted in 1981 on U.S. federal charges in Florida and a formal request for extradition was submitted to Colombia in 1983, and this was granted in 1987. Fanatical in his effort to prevent his extradition, he went as far as forming his own political party, with a key objective of preventing extraditions such as his own from Colombia to the United States. His extradition finally happened only after the murder of Colombia's Justice Minister who was at the time prosecuting his case. Lehder was sentenced to 135 years in federal prison, and in the years since then about 1,350 other Colombians have been extradited to the United States. For more information on the Lehder extradition, click [here](#) (p.67).

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